

Nº48

City
of London
Phonograph &
Gramophone
Society

Celebrates its

50th
year

1919 - 1969



APRIL — 1969

Society Meetings

London. "The Bridge House" 6.45 p.m.
Borough Road, London S.E.1.
^{Tuesdays}

13th May. a programme of cylinders
by Ron Armstrong.

10th June. Our President's evening.
of Cylinders.

8th July. Tunes of the Twenties
on Edison discs & cylinders
by Roy Smith

Midlands. "The Giffards Arms."

Victoria Street.

Wolverhampton.

Saturday, 17th May

7.30 p.m.

Hereford. "The Olde Harp."

Catherine Street.

Hereford.

7.0. p.m.

Saturdays, 19th April, 14th June,
16th August, 18th October, 6th December.

Secretaries of "area groups":—

Mr. P. Bennett. [REDACTED]

Goldthorn Park, Wolverhampton. [REDACTED]

Mr. D. Watson. [REDACTED] Tupsley,
Hereford. [REDACTED]

Fifty Years On

by The Chairman

In March, 1919 an assembly of enthusiasts formed what is now the City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society. To many of us this is more than a lifetime away; there are others who can well remember the Society in the early days. To most, 1919 seems distant, but we should remind ourselves that the Society was functioning before the Versailles Treaty was signed in the June of that year, the very month that Alcock and Brown flew the Atlantic and showed the way that very many today regard as a commonplace experience.

The Gramophone Industry was settling down after the Great War with another six years of acoustic recording before it, but in 1919 an historic stride was made by Merriman and Guest who began experiments with electrical recording, leading to their actual recording of some of the Service of the Burial of the Unknown Warrior at Westminster Abbey. Caruso, whose debt to the Gramophone - and vice versa - can never be assessed, was to make records for another eighteen months.

In this country and throughout the civilised world there was still a strong band of cylinder enthusiasts in being, their needs were provided by a diminishing number of manufacturers, but the Edison Company was to cater for them for a further ten years. It was the high quality of these products and the durability of their machines that have ensured the existence of our Society today, and enabled it to grow numerically and broaden its interest far beyond the imagination of its founders. This expansion can be attributed to two main factors, firstly the resurgence of the interest in mechanical things of the immediate past, and secondly the world-wide circulation of the HILLANDALE NEWS which endorses that interest. This was originated as a single foolscap sheet by the late Bob Wormald, and has now grown to a task occupying much of our Honorary Secretary's spare time. We are all in his debt for this.

Nor must we forget our President, Gerry Annand, who, by maintaining a very lively world-wide correspondence, helps to spread our name. His research into the yesteryear of the 'Talking Machine' is well-known and will be of permanent benefit to enthusiasts of the future.

The Society has reached its Golden Jubilee, probably the first Phonograph or Gramophone Society anywhere so to do, a short time in the ninety-two years' existence of the 'Talking Machine', but some groups of earlier foundation closed during the Great War, and those who survived it were disbanded in the 'twenties'. All of us who play records should sometimes give a thought to those early pioneers whose efforts made it possible, Edison, Berliner, Bell & Tainter and all the others, individualists all, who used their mental and financial strength and worked all hours backed by a tremendous faith in themselves, to achieve something which we now tend to take for granted, and it is a tribute to the soundness of their inventions that to this day we continue to drag a stylus through a groove to create sound, still the most convenient way of producing "instant music".

We must not forget to salute that small group of British enthusiasts and leading-lights of their day in sound recording and reproduction, Sykes, Seymour and others, who met one evening in March 1919 and formed the Society. Of that group Arthur Weatherley ("The Baron") survives, and we hope he will be well enough to join us at our Dinner on 10th. May.

At the Dinner the Society will be host to several early starters in the recording business, people who were connected with the trade at the end of the last century, artists who recorded in the 1900's, and kind friends of the Society, who, though not members, go out of their way to help us. There will be every opportunity to meet them and honour them warmly, as well as to renew friendships with members whom we do not see often.

Tickets are selling well, and there should be no difficulty in catering for any number of diners, but the organisers would like your applications made as soon as possible. There are tickets available now, but to comply with licensing laws a list of those attending must be sent to the Victory Club in good time before the Dinner.

As the Society is now in its second fifty years of existence, it should be borne in mind that there will doubtless be a Centenary Dinner in 2019, when some younger members will have an interesting story to tell!

We do hope that you will join us on 10th May.

George Frow.

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... Our Guest is George Baker by Len Watts

At our monthly meeting in the 'Bridge House' on 11th February, 1969, Len Watts gave another of his programmes of Pathé centre-start discs, and invited as a special guest, Mr. George Baker, the famous baritone, who started his recording career with Pathé Frères in December, 1909, making over 3000 records for various companies during the next fifty-years. His 1962 recording of "Iolanthe" has recently been re-issued by E.M.I.

The programme began with The Pathé March. No composer is named on the disc, neither is the orchestra. This was followed by several French marches, also by anonymous orchestras but it is thought that members of the Garde Républicaine Band were engaged to make this type of record for Pathé.

Two of Mr. Baker's records were then played. The first was "The Star of Bethlehem" dating from early 1910, being one of his first, and then "A Frivolous Ballad" by Slater, dating from 1913. The programme note called attention to the noticeable improvement in recorded tone in the intervening three years. Mr. Baker agreed with this.

Our Chairman then formally introduced our guest, who was kind enough to talk at length about his recording career.

"These Pathé records", said Mr. Baker, "take me so far back in time, it seems like another life." He continued to say that he did not remember "A Frivolous Ballad" by Slater, but well remembered making "Star of Bethlehem". He does not possess a single Pathé record but he had them in the past. "They are so easily broken, being made of shellac compound", he said, "and over the years they have broken, lost in house-moving or stolen." He has some records he likes very much but is not such a keen collector as the Members present at the meeting.

Mr. Baker had come to London early in 1909, having gained a scholarship to the Royal College of Music, on a maintenance grant of £20 a year. The clarinetist Haydn Draper persuaded him to go to Pathé's London studio to make a test recording. This was "Tommy Lad" by Margetson. It was several months before he heard anything from Pathé, and in the interval he had prospered a little, so that when he presented himself at the studio, now more smartly

dressed, the recording engineers could not believe it to be the same person. They insisted on his making another test recording of the same song! Only then were they satisfied that it was the same person.

Russell Hunting, who was then Pathé's recording engineer, heard the test record, and put Mr. Baker under a year's contract. The first two recordings were "I'm coming through the corn Sweet Eileen" and "Nellie Dean". This record was issued under the pseudonym of 'Arthur George': a copy of this was to hand and was played. "The name Arthur George", Mr. Baker continued, "is my own two Christian names reversed. I usually drop the Arthur out of my names because, as you can see, the initials spell themselves. For the same reason (Sir) Arthur Sullivan dropped his second name, Seymour."

After the success of the first record, Mr. Baker was put under a further two years' contract with Pathé. He continued to record popular songs under his pseudonym for two guineas per song, and more serious songs and operatic items were issued under his real name, and he was paid three guineas per song.

All this happened before the World War I, and it was virtually another life. The vast difference in recording into a horn sticking out of the wall of the studio, and the modern methods are worlds apart. Here Mr. Baker made a cone out of his programme, and demonstrated to the Members the technique of singing into the horn. He said he used to keep his upper lip more or less level with the top of the horn, and had to turn aside for the higher notes, otherwise they over-recorded, and spoilt the tone of the record. He also demonstrated how to duck down when it was the orchestra's turn, so that the sound reached the diaphragm better.

"The great thing in the early days," said Mr. Baker, "was enunciation. My voice had a certain clarity which recorded well. All the singers picked by Russell Hunting to record had successful careers on the stage or concert platform. There was only one mistake, Thorpe Bates. Nobody will deny that he had a brilliant concert career, but somehow he did not have the same success on record."

Mr. Baker went on to say that due to the small number of singers in the recording business in the early days, the companies tended to fill the catalogues with fictitious names. He recalled as many of his own aliases as he could remember. Apart from Arthur George on Pathé, he also appeared as Howard in the duet partnership of Howard and Harris, singing hymns, Harris being the tenor Hughes Macklin. He said he had appeared on the H.M.V., Decca, Odeon, Beka and Vocalion labels. Some of his aliases were Walter Jefferies (H.M.V.), Walter Duncan, Victor Norbury, George Barnes, Victor Conway (Decca), George Portland (Columbia), and Uncle George on children's records. He recorded some of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas on Columbia under a pseudonym, because he was under contract to H.M.V. He said there was a long list of duets by Walter Jefferies and Eric Courtland, the latter being Ernest Pike.

He related a little anecdote about a journalist once approaching him. The journalist was writing biographies of famous singers, but had been unable to trace Walter Jefferies. "Well, he's talking to you now!" said Mr. Baker to the journalist.

Mr. Baker considered the best record he ever made was for Decca of Leslie Stuart's "Lily of Laguna", with oboe obbligato by Leon Goossens. He said he had made well over three thousand records, certainly not four thousand, but well over three.

Harking back to the old days for a moment, Mr. Baker explained how the public was sometimes deceived. He described the making of an early 'descriptive' record of "Departure of a

Troopship". There were several of this type of record made by various companies including those made by Albert Whelan and Russell Hunting. "On mine, I did all the characters by altering my voice. I had to play the part of the soldier as well as the cockney boy shouting along the quayside. In fact, I was the whole cast! Today there is the stereophonic system which reproduces exactly what you did, but does not! You know it does not! But, of course to-day, recording is so much easier. So much can be achieved by tape - editing. Mistakes can be cut out afterwards. In the old days it was necessary to have clarity of voice so that it did not upset the delicate soundbox. We had to know the technique of singing into the horn and dodging out of the way for the orchestra at the right moments. We had to make the record right through without any mistakes, otherwise we had to begin all over again. It was not twice as difficult to repeat, it was four times as difficult!"

"They like me at the recording studios", said Mr. Baker, "because I did not make too many mistakes. One of the most difficult songs to record is the Lord Chancellor's song from 'Iolanthe'. It's so quick." (Here Mr. Baker sang a few bars to illustrate the point.) "When we were making the recording of Iolanthe for H.M.V. in the early 'Twenties' I got this song right first time."

"My wife, Olive Groves, and I made a good many records for Decca. I just cannot recall the name she used for that label." (We think this was Anne Welch). Jack Hylton had brought Pat O'Malley over from America as vocalist with his band, but for recording he used other vocalists as well. George Baker and Stuart Robertson were used chiefly for marching songs. "We were very distinguished", quipped Mr. Baker, "On the label we were called 'Vocal Refrain'. Hylton would work very hard. He would telephone artists unexpectedly calling them to the recording studio, thrusting a new song at them and insisting on a test recording immediately. On one occasion Mr. Baker remembers completing the issue recording of a new song which he had never seen before, only forty minutes after receiving Jack Hylton's telephone call.

The eminent conductor Hugo Rignold was once a violinist for Jack Hylton, who always had good orchestrators, Peter Yorke being one of them. On one occasion Mr. Baker orchestrated "Stormy Weather" for him, and brought in a snippet from Mendelssohn's 'Hebrides Overture'. William Walton had a contract with Jack Payne at one time, while Benjamin Frankel was with Geraldo.

"My recording career has been so long," continued Mr. Baker, "I sometimes wonder if I am a reincarnation, and I have done so many things. I was in the first British recording of Beethoven's Choral Symphony under Albert Coates, and in the first British recording of "Parsifal" and of Strauss's "Salome". I am remembered best as a Gilbert and Sullivan singer. Wherever I go I am remembered as The Gilbert and Sullivan man. This is due chiefly to the great popularity of their work. Other songs that took my name around the World are the A.A. Milne songs, 'When we were very young' and the 'Hums of Pooh'. I went to America in 1927 and found that I was better known than I was here, due to my Gilbert and Sullivan records. When I go to the B.B.C. for an interview (e.g. with Eric Robinson in 'Music for You') I was asked which records I recommended should be played and I selected the opening of the Beethoven Choral Symphony, but when the programme was broadcast everything that was not Gilbert and Sullivan had been deleted.

"The atmosphere today in the recording studios is vastly different. In the old days we used to get a lot of fun out of making a record, but now conductors are the emperors of

the world of music, and everything has to be done just so under their command and all the fun has gone. Some of them take the work far too seriously and strive for perfection, and they make fewer records today as a consequence.

I was luckier than some of the others. As I have told you, I was paid up to three guineas a recording, and some afternoons we recorded six songs and I was paid in golden sovereigns, not in bits of paper.

"There was once a man named Rip van Winkle, and I think that must be me. Today now I've come back I hardly recognise the world I'm in, except that I mix with young people still and I am not out of touch with things. Owen Brannigan carries on the Gilbert and Sullivan tradition -- he is a pupil of mine. I've had many successful pupils in my time. Some years ago I had a tenor at the Guildhall School of Music, when I taught there for a short while, and he got first prize, and gave a concert at The Mansion House for the Lord Mayor of London, and within a fortnight he had his name up in lights --- as a comedian at 'The Windmill'!!"

Mr. Baker had been shown a 1914 Pathé record catalogue just prior to giving his talk, and he now referred to his biography in it. "It was my birthday yesterday," he said, "and I see here I won a scholarship to the Royal College of Music in 1889. So that makes me about a hundred years old!!!"

After the interval, the recital of Pathé records was resumed, and in between some orchestral items, more of Mr. George Baker's records were played. One disc particularly amused him. One one side was "You taught me to love you" by Meyer, and the reverse was "You wish me to forget you" by Donelly. One of the items played was Graham Peel's "In Summer-time on Bredon", which Mr. Baker considered to be possibly his best for Pathé.

Owing to lack of time, a few of the originally-planned items had to be omitted, but Mr. Baker cast his eye down the programme and asked that the record of the French bass Hypolite Belhomme should not be omitted. This was "Air du sonneur" from Paladilhe's "Patrie", and the Members were so delighted with the beautiful rich voice that the reverse of the disc was played, "Air de Vulcain" from Philemon et Baucis by Gounod. The programme finished with two more of Mr. Baker's records, "Out on the Deep" (Lohr) and "Asleep in the Deep" (Petrie). This last item ended on a descending scale, Mr. Baker reaching the lowest of the low notes.

George Baker is a remarkable man, and it gave us all pleasure to hear his early records, and a few of his many experiences. Singer, teacher, music-arranger, writer, B.B.C. Music Director adjudicator, organist and choirmaster, he has done them all; he is the complete musician.

George Baker, baritone. A Pathé Discography.

compiled by Len Watts

24 c.m. records as ARTHUR GEORGE.

78696	Nellie Dean	78697	When the harvest moon is shining Sweet Eileen.
78813	Seagull	78822	I wonder if you miss me sometimes
8268	78720 ¹	That's why the British loved the King	78720 ² -2 parts- (Barrett)
8274	Long live the King (Andrews)		Queen of the nations (del Riego)
8290	78811	I wonder who's kissing her now (Howard)	78812 Beautiful Garden of roses (Schmidt)
8291	78823	Old rustic bridge by the mill (Skellen)	78824 Song of the Thrush (le Brun)

- 24 c.m. records as ARTHUR GEORGE
 8307 Nobody knows, nobody cares (Harris) The merry monarchs. Starlight maid (Klein)
 8359 78985 You were coming through the corn, Molly dear. 78996 Sweet Caroline (Haynes & Meyer)
 8406 79157 Dearie goodbye (Darweski) 79158 Meet me tonight in Dreamland (Friedman)
 8441 79372 You taught me how to love you (Meyer) 79373 You wish me to forget you (Donnelly)
 8442 79374 Let me kiss those tears away (Scott) 79375 Do you remember the last waltz (Scott)
 8492 79483 Won't you waltz? (Ingraham) 79484 All that I ask is love (Ingraham)
 8532 79570 I am thinking of you, Bonny Mary 79571 When the drums begin to roll
 8533 You are my sunbeam (Darweski) Winter (Gumble)
 8534
- 28 c.m. records as ARTHUR GEORGE
 256 The collier's life (Neagle) My heart is with you tonight (Mills and Scott)
 304 The hymns my mother used to sing (Langford) The old sweet melody (Hardy) (both with Alice Craven)
 5309 Just plain folks (Stonehill) There's a mother always waiting (Thornton)
 5325 You do look cosy in your caravan (Allan) That's what the rose said to me (Edwards)
 5325 Hello little Miss Llewellyn (Godfrey & Williams) We'll go to church on Sunday (Gideon)
 (both with Alice Craven)
- 24 c.m. records as GEORGE BAKER
 7874¹ The Star of Bethlehem (Adams) 7874² -2 parts -
 7874⁹ The Holy City (Adams) 7874⁹ -2 parts -
 8396 79125 Thora (Adams) 79126 Because (d'Hardelot)
 8608 79671 Asleep in the deep (Petrle) 79672 Out on the deep (Loeb)
 8720 The Vicar of Bray Here's a health unto His Majesty
 8791 Down among the dead men I am a friar of orders grey
 8847 Geisha: Jack's the boy (Jones) My Darling: Hats off to the King (Ephraim)
- 28 c.m. records as GEORGE BAKER
 69 79093 Grey Eyes (Phillips) 79094 It's not because your heart is mine (Loeb)
 107 On the roll of the open sea (Petrle) A hundred fathoms deep (Fuller)
 111 92186 At Santa Barbara (Russell) 92187 A frivolous ballad (Slater)
 494 92340 The sailor's dance (Mollo) 92341 The Admiral's yarn (Rubens)
 200 92237 The Two Gendarmes (Offenbach) 92238 The French maid, twin duet (Slaughter)
 (both with Stanley Kirby)
- Count of Luxemburg: Love breaks every bond (Lehar) 79305 Staircase waltz (Lehar) (both with Blanche Benscher)

28	c.m.	records as <u>GEORGE BAKER</u>		
619	92467	The farmer's pride (Russell)	92468	The Irish Fusilier (Squire)
651	There's a hill by the sea (Löhr)		92468	Little Grey Home in the West (Löhr)
658	Land of the harlequinade (Oliver)		92561	Marna (Oliver)
730	In summer-time on Bredon (Peel)		92562	The Jolly old bachelor (Morgan)
752	Before you came (Wilson)			Mandalay (Milleby)
770	The sands o' Dee (Clay)			Son of mine (Wallace)
871	78737 A rose memory (Deacon)		78739	Tommy Lad (Margeson)
885	Chocolate Soldier: Sympathy, duet. with Leonora Sparks.			
886	Rigoletto: Quartet with Cheetham, Herwin, Sparks			
891	Tommy Lad (Margeson)	Mother o'mine		
960				
5194	The arrow and the song (Balfe)		For you alone (Balfe)	
5218	79673 Mausme: Memories, duet. (MacKnighton)		79874 Iolanthe: None shall part us (Sullivan)	(both with Carrie Herwin)
5226	Nina Gitana (Newton)	Astshore (Trotter)		
5287	Drake's drum (Stanford)	The Old Superb (Stanford)		
5288	79986 Gipsy Love: Love and Wine (Lehar)	79987 Gipsy Song (Lehar)		
5355	92263 The song that reached my heart (Jordan)	92169 Silver threads among the gold (Danks)		(both with Carrie Herwin)
5374	The Grenadier (Eric Coates)	A Dinder Courtship (Eric Coates)		
5428	Hybias the Cretan (Elliott)	Song of the flea (Mussorgsky)		
5430	Follow me 'ome (Ward-Higgs)	She is far from the land (Lambert)		
5429	Tomorrow will be Friday (Molloy)	Simon the cellarar (Hutton)		
35	c.m. records as <u>GEORGE BAKER</u>			
2021	The Lowland Sea	In a Persian Garden: Myself when young (Liza Lehmann)		
2040	79281 Carmen: Toreador Song (Bizet)	79382 Bedouin Love Song (Pinsitt)		
	Songs of the Northern Hills (Herbert Oliver):			
2152	Of the North I sing	When the ships come home		
<hr/> <u>APPROXIMATE GUIDE TO DATES</u> 78696/7. Mr. Baker's first two titles for Pathé = December, 1909.				
78700 to 79090	* 1910	79100 to 79290 = 1911	79300 to 79570 = 1912	79980 to 79999 = 1913
92060 to 92340 = 1913		92400 to 92560 = early 1914		

This listing is compiled from the actual discs seen, a 1914-15 Pathé catalogue, information supplied by Mr. Edward Murray-Harvey and Vertical Cut Cylinders and Discs by Girard & Barnes.

GEORGE BAKER DISCOGRAPHY CONTINUED.

Editor's addition. Chancing to check through my notes I find that by the 1921 catalogue, only two records by Arthur George remained and nine by George Baker. They had been allocated new catalogue numbers, so I list them below.

10-inch (24 c.m.) as ARTHUR GEORGE

- 1088 The old rustic bridge by the mill(Skely) with bird effects(8291 above)
 1088 The song of the thrush(le Brun) " " " "
 1216 When the harvest moon is shining(Bowers) (78697 above)
 1216 In the valley where the blue birds sing(with chorus)(Solman)
 (This latter title is not shown above. Could it be from the 8534 number?)

12 - inch as GEORGE BAKER

- 5230 For you alone (Geehl) (5194 above)
 5230 The arrow and the song (Balfe) (")
 5231 A hundred fathoms deep(Mullen) (107 above)
 5231 A frivolous ballad (Slater) (111 above) (N O T E : if you have
 5232 The Admiral's Yarn(Rubens) (494 above) (any further information
 5232 The land of harlequinade(Oliver)(658 above) (on the records of
 5233 In Summer-time on Bredon(Peel) (730 above) (George Baker/Arthur George
 5233 Mandalay(Willeby) (752 above) (on Pathé, kindly send it
 5234 Drake's drum (Stanford) (5287 above) (to Mr. Len Watts,
 5234 The Old Superb(Stanford) (") (61, Fifth Cross Road,
 5235 Song of the flea(Mussorgsky) (5428 above) (Twickenham,
 5236 A Dinder courtship(Eric Coates)(5374 above) (Middlesex.
 5235 Hybias the Cretan(Elliott) (5428 above)
 5236 Simon the cellarer (Hatton) (5429 above)
 5448 There's a hill by the sea(Löhr)(651 above)
 5448 Little grey home in the west(Löhr)(651 above)
 5449 Tommy Lad(Margetson) (891 & 871 above)
 5449 Mother o'mine (Tours) (891 above)

* * * * *

Telephony Had Its Own "Three 'B's" by O.Berliner

The year was 1876 and the City of Philadelphia, "birthplace" of the United States of America, was celebrating the first hundred years of America's independence by way of the Centennial Exhibition. A then obscure Scotsman from Nova Scotia, elocution specialist Dr. A. G. Bell, was demonstrating a device which he called the telephone and which was submitted, along with other inventions of the time, to a panel of judges. The tired judges appeared disinterested, but the Emperor of Brazil refused to let them turn away. He tried the instrument and exclaimed, "Good Heavens, it talks!" Later another judge was to proclaim the telephone "The Most Wonderful Thing in America".

Unfortunately, the "good doctor's" miraculous creation suffered from a single drawback, one that undoubtedly contributed to the fact that the telephone did not achieve commercial reality until mid-1877. The piece into which one spoke was what we call scound

Reminder

The Society's "Golden Jubilee Dinner" will be held on Saturday, 10th May, 1969* commencing 7.30 p.m. at the Victory Ex-Services Club, Seymour Street, London, W.2. Tickets, price £1-15s. each, available from Gordon Bromly, [REDACTED] Kent BR4 OHB.

I M P O R T A N T If you order more than one ticket, kindly give us the name(s) of the rest of your party, as we must furnish all the names to the Club in order to comply with the law !!!

* * * * *

FOR SALE

FOR SALE

A large collection -- about 4,000 -- of classical vocal and instrumental 78 r.p.m. discs, including Victor, Columbia, Edisen (about 70 Diamond Discs), and other brands. Most of these records are vocal, but there are quite a few miscellaneous instrumental singles, e.g. Elman, Kreisler, etc. Of the vocal records, there are about 2000 singles -- electrical and acoustical the remainder being complete albums of various operas, etc. some of which have records missing. Many of the vocal records are duplicates of one another. There are, for example, about 96 Caruso solos, and another 60 or so of duets, etc. There are also over 350 McCormack singles. There are obviously too many records to list here by the artists singly, title, condition, etc. But, I should be happy to correspond with any interested party. I should prefer to sell the collection in toto, and, since I am particularly desirous of selling them this way, I'd accept a very reasonable offer for the entire group.

DAVID H. WALLIS.

[REDACTED] Hinsdale, Illinois 60521, U.S.A.

* * * * *

WANTED

WANTED

New Century, Phrynis, London Popular, Ebonoid, etc., unusual makes of cylinder records, or their boxes, and any literature adverts, etc. I will pay cash or exchange. A. Besford, [REDACTED]

Norfolk

* WANTED TO BUY

* I want to buy individual phonographs or a large collection of unusual machines of English make * and those of the European 'continent'. Kindly * send information and photographs. I shall be * coming to Britain in August, 1969.

* E.T.DRAKE. [REDACTED]

* INDIANA 46151. U.S.A.

* * * * *

WANTED

WANTED

Certain cylinder and disc records.

Write for list.

E. Lehman. [REDACTED]

Dayton. OHIO 45414. U.S.A.

* WANTED

WANTED

* An Edison phonograph in fine condition.

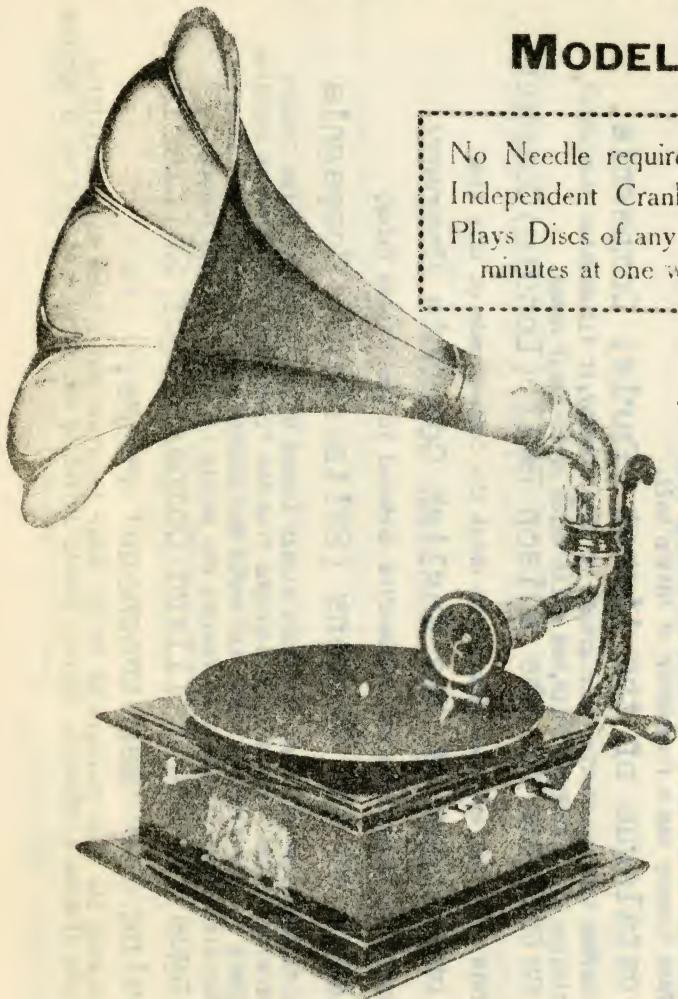
* The discs, "History Speaks" and "Hark the Years"

* Will trade a Columbia disc of Sembrich "Ernani"

* M.L.Gardner. [REDACTED]

Somerset.

PATHÉ Disc Machine.



MODEL F.

No Needle required.
Independent Crank Winder.
Plays Discs of any size Three
minutes at one winding.

Price - £2 5 0

INCLUDES—The Motor in Varnished Case, Hinged Top, to allow examination of Motor.

A Flower Horn, "F."

Pathé's New Patent Ebonite Sound Box, fitted with unwearable Sapphire for playing Pathe Discs.

PATHÉ DISCS begin from the centre.

PATHÉ An Electronic Stencil Copy
of a page from our forthcoming reprint catalogue

THE CITY OF LONDON PHONOGRAPH & GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY

Secretary: Ernest Bayly, 19. Glendale Road, Bournemouth BH6 4JA, England.

(Note: All checks, money orders, postal orders, etc., must be made payable in the full name of the Society)

PUBLICATIONS

(all prices in this list include postage)

FACSIMILE REPRINT SERIES

Reprints of early catalogues depicting original

'talking machines'

\$ 1.50 each

1. 1898 catalogue of Edisonia (London) Company.

Showing early Edison and Columbia phonographs.

This Company was a forerunner of Edison Bell.

2. 1900 catalogue of the Lioret (Paris) Compagnie.

Besides the interesting phonographs of this company, it illustrates 'automata', singing dolls, acrobat dolls, and dolls which wrote their names.

3. 1905 catalogue of the Edison Bell (London) Company

This shows the cylinder phonographs which the Company made at this time.

4. 1906 catalogue of the English Columbia Company

Depicting phonographs and accessories marketed in the British Isles.

5. catalogue of the Thorens (Switzerland) Compagnie

A 'compendium' of three catalogues kindly loaned by the important Swiss Company showing cylinder and disc phonographs from the "Edwardian" era. Thorens supplied parts to many firms all over the world who mounted them into their own cases, or supplied complete models to vendors who merely applied their own names.

6. catalogue of the Paillard Compagnie of Switzerland showing its 'Maestrophone' range.

Showing the disc phonographs of the other important Swiss firm whose activities were similar to Thorens. Depicts models driven by hot air! - as well as by springs.

"NUMERICAL CATALOGUES" SERIES*

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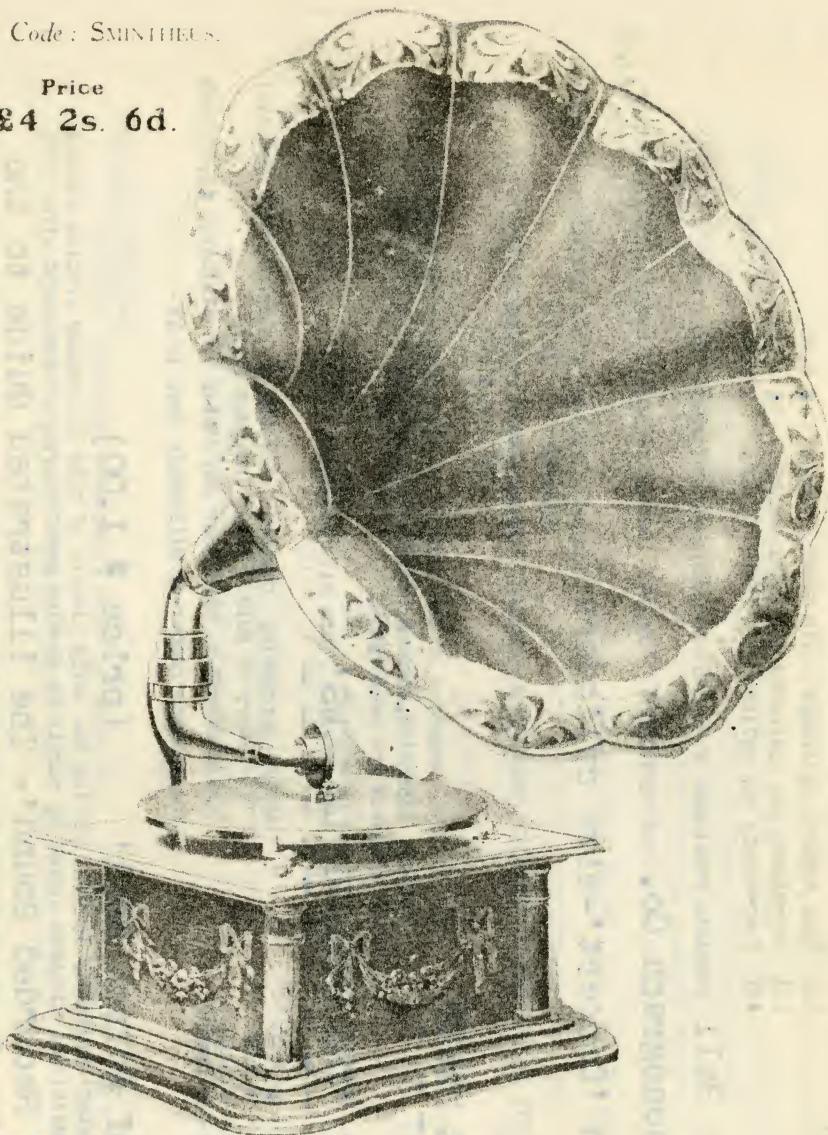
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Batten was an early piano accompanist of the Edison Bell cylinder days who became musical director through to days of discs. Then he left to join Columbia. Some very interesting reminiscences by one who was 'behind the scenes' seeing what really happened.

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powered . . . the talker's voice generated the entire telephones are still used today in military applications and in locations where even a low voltage could generate a spark that could ignite explosives), with the result that volume level was too low and transmission distance was thus severely limited. Commercial usage could not possibly exist under these circumstances.

Emile Berliner, then but twenty-five years of age and who had quit school at the age of fourteen and who came to America from Germany in 1870 with no money and no knowledge of English, was one of a number of people who, following Bell's example, were trying to develop a practical telephone. A dry goods clerk by trade, he studied part time at Cooper Union in New York and lived alone in a one-room flat. From time to time he would visit his friend Alvin Richards, a fire station telegraph operator. One day, Richards let my grandfather try his hand at a spare telegraph key. "No, no," exclaimed Richards, "You must press the key harder to get a decent reception at the other end!" "You mean to say that a firmer contact here produces a better reception there?" said Berliner. "That's right," was the reply.

This was the missing link for which my grandfather had been searching. He rushed home and rigged a battery and receiver in series with two contacts which barely touched each other and which were mounted on a 7 x 12 inch soapbox. It worked! And, not only had the immigrant youth invented the microphone but he created the loose contact principle, which has never been changed or superseded to this day. Every commercial telephone in the world today makes use of this amazing discovery which made practical telephony a reality.

Gardner G. Hubbard, father of Dr. Bell's deaf wife, was the man to whom Emile Berliner brought his invention. Bell and Hubbard immediately recognised that the Berliner "telephone transmitter" was needed to substitute for Bell's sound powered transmitter. The announcement of the acquisition of the Berliner microphone skyrocketed the value of Bell System stock and commercial telephones became a reality. Francis Blake, using Berliner's loose contact principle, developed the forerunner of today's carbon granule microphone. This method provided much improved clarity and Blake's original design became the standard for many years. Interestingly, Blake's creation did not lend itself to proper functioning under mass-produced field usage, and Blake himself was unable to overcome the production difficulties. Emile Berliner was called back to "improve" upon the improved transmitter. He succeeded, and reliable telephones became a reality.

But all was not yet serene, for telephony's "three B's - Bell, Berliner and Blake -- were soon to receive a setback. The much more powerful Western Union Telegraph Company had also entered the telephone business, using microphone patents of Thomas Edison, whose invention of the electric light had elevated him from obscurity to international fame and prestige. Edison/Western Union challenged the validity of the Berliner microphone patent in court. In 1897 the Supreme Court of the United States rendered the most monumental patent decision of all time. It established a former immigrant boy as the rightful inventor of the microphone, by ruling that Emile Berliner, working without the services of a professional, expensive patent attorney which he could not afford, had filed a valid patent by himself some two weeks prior to the professionally filed similar Edison application.

This decision saved the Bell System from destruction and paved the way towards its becoming the world's largest corporation. Edison and Western Union, rather than pay

extensive monetary damages for infringement, agreed to get out of the telephone business instead, as they saw their attempt to beat a poor man because of legal technicalities go down to defeat. Rather than take Bell System shares in return for his invention, Berliner took \$ 50,000 cash, for he truly needed the money. That sum, had it been in corporate stock would probably be worth at least \$ 50,000,000 today.

Ten years after he saw his microphones go into the homes of untold Americans who never would know his name, for, unlike his rival, my grandfather was foolishly modest, Emile Berliner would go on to invent the flat disc and the Gramophone "which made every home a concert hall and taught the plowboy to whistle grand opera". Incredibly, this invention too was challenged . . . yes, by the same Thomas Edison . . . but Berliner again prevailed and the giant recording industry that we know today, was launched in 1887 - though this was ten years before the Supreme Court's landmark decision. . . But that is another story. . .

* * * * *

How it all began

THE FOUNDING OF THE CITY OF LONDON PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY

by Sydney Carter and an early Member of the Society who wishes to remain
Anonymous.

It was early in 1919 that John Hillyer chanced to meet his old friend Adrian Sykes and outlined his suggestion for the formation in London of a Phonograph Society.

Did he think that it would be possible to find sufficient fellows who were interested enough in the Phonograph to make such a venture a success?

Where could they meet, and who could be found to address them?

The war was over, food rationing was still severe, and owing to the dollar restrictions no further records could be imported from the United States.

All production of British cylinder records had come to an end in 1915 so there were no supplies at all of new records.

The prospect was discouraging, but Adrian Sykes was far-seeing and pressed John Hillyer to go ahead with his plans.

Thomas A. Edison should certainly be consulted and if and if he was agreeable, the Society should be entitled The London Edison Society.

Back came Edison's reply - Yes, he was fully in favour of a Phonograph Society being formed but NOT with the title which had been suggested, for he did not wish his name to appear.

Then came the brilliant suggestion, why not the City of London Phonograph Society? This was immediately agreed, a room was secured and in April 1919 an inaugural meeting was arranged at the Food Reform Restaurant in Holborn (near to Gomages).

At this inaugural meeting Thomas A. Edison was recommended as Patron and John Hillyer as Chairman, and a programme of regular monthly meetings was mapped out.

Early Members, most of whom are unfortunately no longer with us included the electrical engineer Adrian Sykes (who became President in 1922*), Mr. Seymour, Mr. Lewis Young, Mr. Felix Sykes and Mr. Arthur Weatherley both of whom we still know, Mr. Nodding and Mr. P. J. Packmann, who was probably one of the manufactureres of "Pioneer" cylinders.

Mr. Seymour came along with his Columbia BC Graphophone in 1923, filling the room

with great volume from this exceptional machine.

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Mr. Seymour was well-known for his experiments with different sorts of diaphragms and other accessories in his endeavour to derive the best tone from cylinders.

The Society gradually got into its stride. Adrian Sykes, who became President in 1922, gave untiring aid and encouragement.

The monthly meetings were later held at another restaurant nearly opposite. No August meetings were held. There were no visits to talking machine factories during the years between 1922 and 1929. Other Societies had made such visits prior to 1914. In the early days our Society ran a lending library of Blue Amberol cylinders at sixpence per dozen records for a month, and Members changed their records at the monthly meetings.

One incident from the early days is certainly worth mentioning, and at the time it was regarded as a serious matter. Following one of the meetings, the reproducer from the Society's phonograph was found to be missing, so at the following meeting the Chairman made it known and appealed for its return - and there would be no questions asked. Surely enough, at the next meeting it was discovered on the table. One person knew how it got there - and he was not telling!!

And so after fifty years our Society goes happily forward, with a steadily increasing membership of approaching six hundred active Members, spread all over the world, and a bi-monthly journal, "THE HILLANDALE NEWS", of which we can all be justly proud.

In the satisfaction of today, let us never forget those who gave so willingly of their time and energy to found the Society which all our Members now enjoy.

ALL HONOUR TO THEM

EDITOR'S NOTE. Other incidents in the earlier days of our Society have been collated by Mr. Ted Lewis in HILLANDALE NEWS numbers 18 and 19 (of 1964); (wherein it is said that the very first meeting of our Society was held in somebody's office) and thereafter in the Food Reform Restaurant, and that Mr. Adrian Sykes did not become our President until the death of Thomas A. Edison) and in the Guide to the Society's 1967 Exhibition. Very few written records of meetings exist in those account-books and minute books remaining from the early days.

My favourite recording artist by Michael Eert

B o b R o b e r t s

Robert S. Roberts was born 27th April, 1879 in Cincinnati, Ohio. His father Nicholas, who came out from Germany in the early days, was proprietor of the Roberts Pantomime Company. Bob therefore grew up in an environment which gave him an excellent foundation for his future career as recording artist, and travelling showman.

Probably Roberts' connection with a travelling minstrel company was the means by which he began his recording career. Somebody from the Columbia Company must have heard him, and realised his potential, as he was recording for Columbia in 1902, and possibly as early as 1899. I have his Columbia cylinder of "I'd leave me happy home for you" and I believe it to be an 1899 song. Numerically, the earliest record of his that I have traced is Columbia x7200, "Old Black Joe". Unfortunately my knowledge of Columbia dates from that period is very sparse, but I would estimate the record from 1899 or 1900. Certainly, by mid-1902 Columbia was

regularly issuing Roberts cylinders.

"I'd leave me happy home for you" has been called the first "coon song". So from the start Roberts specialised in coon and comic songs; in fact, "Old Black Joe" is, as far as I believe, the only really serious song he ever recorded. Up until early 1904 Roberts recorded for Columbia cylinders only. During this time, his distinctive baritone voice, and inimitable singing style helped popularise such coon songs as 'Please let me sleep', 'Just kiss yourself goodbye', and 'Ain't dat a shame'. By early 1904 he was recording for Columbia discs, Victor discs and Edison cylinder. His Edison work is by far the best, and I am going to ignore his other work for the next four years, and deal only with his Edison records.

Bob Roberts' first Edison record was one of his best. 8617, 'The woodchuck song' released February, 1904, was a great success, and for the next few years a new Roberts record was released every month.

Although he could have been great as a vaudeville sketch specialist, Roberts seems to have purposely left that sort of work to Len Spencer and Steve Porter. He did make a Columbia cylinder of 'Deacon Coopley's Chicken Raid' with Spencer, and Cal Stewart, but on Edison, comedy songs were his main work. However, in 1904 he made two sketches with Al Campbell (an unlikely combination!), these being 'Interrupted Courtship on the Elevated Railway', and 'Michael Clancy as policeman'. I have heard neither of these records, but they promise to be excellent. Occasionally, if there was room between verses, he would give a short talk, a short example being as follows:

'Ha, ha, ha, ha, . . . I tell you boys, there's nothing like enjoying life! Always remember the old adage, 'When the cat's away the mice will play.'

This is from a ridiculous song by Van Alstyne, entitled, 'Tippiecanoe'. This song is so ridiculous that its worth quoting part of the chorus:-

'Tip, tip, tippiecanoe, he tipped up the bottle until he was blue,
This is no lie, he must have been dry,
The way that old Tippie kept tipping the rye, . . . '

During 1904, Bob made recordings of such gems as 'You're always behind like an old cow's tail' and 'When the coons have a dreamland of their own'. During 1905 he made three duets with Billy Murray, and ten solos, among them, 'Every dollar carries trouble of its own' and 'Nothin' from nothin' leaves you'. By this time he was recording most of the Bert Williams and Lew Dockstader songs from the vaudeville stage. His only rival in this sort of work was the lower-voiced baritone Arthur Collins. In my opinion Collins was better as a duettist, and that is where he did his best work. There was a conflict between the two of them for recording the latest coon songs, and generally Roberts was the winner. In April 1906, when Roberts was busy recording 'Uncle quits work too', the companion song to 'Everybody works but father', Collins got away with the tremendous coon song 'Moving day'. Roberts got even by recording that song for Columbia. Of course this would be a friendly rivalry, if it existed at all. Both Collins and Roberts were genial, even-tempered men, although Jim Walsh quotes Roberts warning Billy Murray when he first came east, to stay away from Columbia, as 'I do all the comedy around there.'

Reverting to Bob's Edison records, in 1906 he made recordings of 'I'd rather be

outside a-lookin' in than inside a-lookin' out', one of his best, and 'Why don't you write when you don't need money!', along with nine others. In case anyone reading this is unfamiliar with the 'coon songs' the following description of the latter title, quoted from the October 1906 Phonogram, tells a typical coon song story;

'This song tells the old story of the coon girl who never hears from her lover until he wants money. The lover is a minstrel man, and all goes well until the troupe busts up on the road, and he goes broke. Then he writes a touching appeal to his girl. She replies, "Why don't you write when you don't need money? etc.'

The supplement goes on to quote the words of the chorus.

By late 1906, Roberts was past the peak of his popularity. Every month a new record was issued, until September 1908, when his last two minute Edison cylinder appeared. The Phonogram description refers to this song, 'Somebody Lied', as 'one of the best comic songs heard in months'. Coon songs were declining in popularity, and were not as good as they were two years previously.

In February 1908 Roberts began recording two minute cylinders for the Indestructible Record Company. The last of the many records he made for this company was issued in July 1911. These Indestructible records were of inferior songs to those he made for Edison, and they were badly recorded. This must have been an exclusive contract, as the month after the last Indestructible was released, an Edison Amberol recording of the same selection was released. Roberts' comeback was disappointingly and inexplicably brief, however. He made only three more Amberols, one excellent Blue Amberol, and faded out completely from the scene. This last record, number 1632, 'Fables', issued January 1913, is one of his best, and I am sure that his records would have continued to sell if he had made them. It must have been a personal decision - by this time he was married, and had a young daughter. Either he lived in Cincinnati and was tired of the journey to New York to make records, or else he was tired of living in New York. Whatever the case, he made no more records for any major company ever again.

In the latter years of his life, Roberts worked on radio shows. He died of a heart attack in 1930, a month after his daughter's marriage.

Although I prefer Roberts to all other recording artists, I must admit that he was never as popular as the old standards such as Burr, Murray, Ada Jones, or MacDonough. I do not know why, as he could very often bring out a coon song much better than even Collins could. Perhaps coon songs were never very popular, and perhaps Roberts signed up with the wrong companies at the wrong time.

Where I live in British Columbia, Roberts records are uncommon, and many well-established collectors in my area have never heard of him. Yet even so, there is something about Bob Roberts that makes him my favourite artist, and I am sure there must be other people besides myself who admire his work.

WANTS AND SHOPS

My main interest is the records of Bob Roberts (Edison, etc. artist). I will trade for, or buy any Roberts record that I do not have. Other favourites are Dan Quinn, Edward M. Favor, Nat Wills, Murry K. Hill, Len Spencer, Steve Porter. I will trade Cal Stewart, Billy Murray, Ada Jones, Harry Lauder, and others for these. Michael Eert.

Victoria, British Columbia, Canada.

THANK - YOU

Thank you Bill Brott for the fine design which you have produced for the front of our fiftieth anniversary cover. We greatly appreciate all the work which went into it.

FOR SALE FOR SALE *
I have for sale a Model W1 all-electric *
H.M.V. Gramophone. This was one of their *
first all-electric models. This kind took *
the record just played and deposited it *
in a slot at the side of the turntable. *

Mr.C.Price, [REDACTED]

Birmingham 21.
* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *
A Jussi Björling discography has been published by the Nationaldiskoteket of Denmark & will be reviewed in our next issue.

INFORMATION

Editor.

CATALOGUE OF BRITISH BLUE AMBEROL
CYLINDERS.

This compact handy catalogue is available
from Gerry Annand, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Hillingdon, Middlesex

price 3s. 6d.

As yet I have had no luck following my 'ad' in February for a reproducer for my GEM. I have obtained an Edison recorder, can anyone tell me if this can be converted into a reproducer? Keith Sherwin,

Wirral, Cheshire L64 0SL

MARIE HALL

INFORMATION

INFORMATION

Dear Mr. Bayly, I refer to the article by A.M. Ember on Marie Hall, in the February issue. I have a Gramophone & Typewriter Monarch 12" 'Angel' record by this artiste, entitled "CONCERTO (Mendelssohn), Allegretto and Allegro Movement. Number 07903(438c). In the article, this number is ascribed to Schubert's MOMENT MUSICAL, while the Violin Concerto Finale is listed as 10" 7990. I write to point out this error, apparently due to the numbers having been transposed. Sincerely, Elspeth Read.

Sincerely, Elspeth Read.

BERNARD BEGUE INFORMATION INFORMATION
Thanks to the researches of Paul Morby I learn that M.Begue in the Edison 2-minute catalogue
and Peter Petz catalogue is Monsieur Bernard Begue. Gerry Annand.

and Peter Bataz Catalogue. National Library of Canada, Ottawa, 1955.

FOR SALE FOR SALE FOR SALE
I have just bought a stock from an Edison Agent so have phonographs for sale, mostly EDISON.
ALL IN GOOD CONDITION and COMPLETE. From £15. "RED" GEM and FIRESIDE in mint
condition. - offer for the two please. There are three Amberola machines 30 & 50 and a large
floor model with big horn inside. Also electric cylinder shaving machine.

500 Amberol Cylinders (sorry no lists) and 400 2-min wax cylinders from 3s. each.
I have many parts, including reproducer and Edison recorder. Buyer collects. Can be seen
any time but let me know first - in time.

There is also an early H.M.V. Radiogram in working order.

S. Roberts, [REDACTED] Luton, Bedfordshire.

Hereford, Fifteenth of February. by M. Gardner.

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It was an uncomfortably chilly evening when we met in Hereford on 15th. February. The first half of the evening was taken by Merle Gardner who spoke on the earliest extant recordings and played on tape the cylinders of Robert Browning, Florence Nightingale, Sir Arthur Sullivan, Edwin Booth and others.

The part of the evening set aside for a chat around the roaring fire with a drink to hand is a feature of the Hereford meetings which delights members. In a convivial atmosphere information is exchanged, theories are expounded, points of view are aired and persons with, frequently expert, knowledge, have a chance to chat on a variety of topics to the interest and enlightenment of others.

In addition to planned speakers and impromptu stimulating conversation, a number of interesting 'machines' are usually seen to be spirited into the gathering by their justly proud owners. At the February meeting Mr. Maloney brought a ca. 1920 Pixie Grippa, a remarkably compact portable disc machine with a small metal horn which inserts into the tone arm near the soundbox, yet is capable of producing sound of considerable quality. Mr. Maloney also brought a magnificent (ca. 1888) electric Phonograph with 'spectacle' reproducer. He had purchased it in very dirty condition but it is now restored to nearly new condition due to his patience and care. Mr D. Watson, the branch secretary, brought his immaculate Edison 'Standard' and played Will Oakland's 2-minute cylinder, "When you and I were young, Maggie", a bit of nostalgia exactly appropriate to the instrument. Mr. C. Lloyd brought his E.M. Ginn gramophone, a selection in interesting vocal recordings, one of which, Celestina Boninsegna's G & T of Ernani: 'Involami', was played on the E.M. Ginn and Pixie Grippa for comparison of reproduction. The reader would be impressed to see the 42-inch 'bell' of the E.M. Ginn, which must be one of the largest seen. Our next meeting will be held at 7 p.m. on 19th April at 'The Olde Harp', Catherine Street, Hereford. Members from anywhere are cordially invited, together with any interested friends.

WANTED WANTED WANTED
The tone - arm and backrest for
a VICTOR ONE Gramophone.
Price no object.

B.L.Coleman. [REDACTED]
Stamford, Connecticut 06905. U.S.A.

EXCHANGE WANTED **EXCHANGE WANTED**
Jazz and Pop music, books, catalogues, photos

Louis TOPIC, [REDACTED] PRAHA 3,
CZECHOSLOVAKIA

I have for sale an H.M.V. Gramophone.
Please write in the first instance.

Miss E.Trevillion,
Flat 6.

Sussex BN3 2PN.

FOR SALE FOR SALE

* Handmade all-electric Console Phonograph for
* Blue Amberols. Oak cabinet, Linera 45 amplifier
* Arkell pickup, Ferguson Loudspeaker. Provision
* for playing gramophone records and for external
* loudspeaker. £ 30.
* Copper Diaphragms for Model C, H & K reproducers
* 6s. each plus 4d. postage.
* Sydney H. Carter. [REDACTED]
* Worthing, Sussex.
*
* I APOLOGISE
* I am now at University studying, I have very
* little time for correspondence & collecting.
* I hope that those friends who have helped me
* in the past will be understanding if I appear
* to have neglected them. I have not forgotten
* them. I shall always be delighted to hear from
* them. Bill Tregoning, [REDACTED]
* American University, Massachusetts & Nebraska Ave
* Washington. D.C. 20016.

Thumb Nail Sketches No.40

by Tyn Phoil

"Old Folks at Home"

Edison Blue Amberol 28143

Sung by Margaret Keyes (contralto)

Sung by Margaret Rybos (Concerto) Stephen Collins Foster can be said to have made a real impact on the world of Folk Music and with Edward McDowell, and George Gershwin , put America on the map with tuneful and attractive music. 1-1-1896. In 1891 he entered

Foster was born at Pittsburg, Pennsylvania on 4th July, 1826. In 1841 he entered Jefferson College, Pittsburg, and although not particularly noted for his studious abilities taught himself French and German, and exhibited a pronounced liking for music. His first published song "Open Thy Lattice, Love" appeared in 1842. Following that he wrote a large number of ballads and songs, many of which have become immortal. Foster generally wrote both the words and the music of his songs, of which he wrote over one hundred and sixty have been published. Scores of them are still known all over the world, and have become genuine folk songs. Songs like "My Old Kentucky Home", "Massa's in the Cold, Cold, Ground" and "Old Black Joe", have firmly fixed themselves in the repertoire of native American music, and seem destined to live for ever.

It is the sheer simplicity of Foster's music which makes such a worldwide appeal.

... on Robert Browning

(Extracted from Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson's book "A Player Under Three Reigns", London, 1925. Sent in to us by Merle Gardner).

'I recall that at an evening party given by Mrs. Rudolph Lehmann, the mother of that much neglected but highly gifted composer, Miss Liza Lehmann, he (Browning), was persuaded, after much pressing, to speak into a phonograph, then quite in its infancy and looked upon as a marvellous instrument! He elected to speak "The Ride from Aix to Ghent", which he proceeded to do with much spirit and effect, but in the middle of the verse he suddenly stopped, and cried out, "God bless my soul! I have forgotten my own lines!" and he joined in our hearty laughter. Presently he recovered himself, and spoke the rest of the poem to much applause. A little time after this event the great poet joined the majority. A year passed, when I had the uncanny experience of hearing that record in the company of many others who had been present at its making. There was again the familiar voice, the pause, his exclamation of astonishment, the roar of laughter, and his taking up the lines, and the burst of applause. In those days, when the phonograph was hardly known, the effect was overwhelming, and set the whole company in the dumps.'

(Editor's note. We wonder if the latter meeting described above is that which we illustrated the 'Hillendale News' No. 29, February, 1966)

PETS CORNER: Notice in a provincial newspaper - 'Councillor, accused of immorality, leaves with bad grace'

THE HILLANDALE NEWS is the official magazine of the City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society. Secretarial & Editorial address, 19. Glendale Road, Bournemouth BH6 4JA.

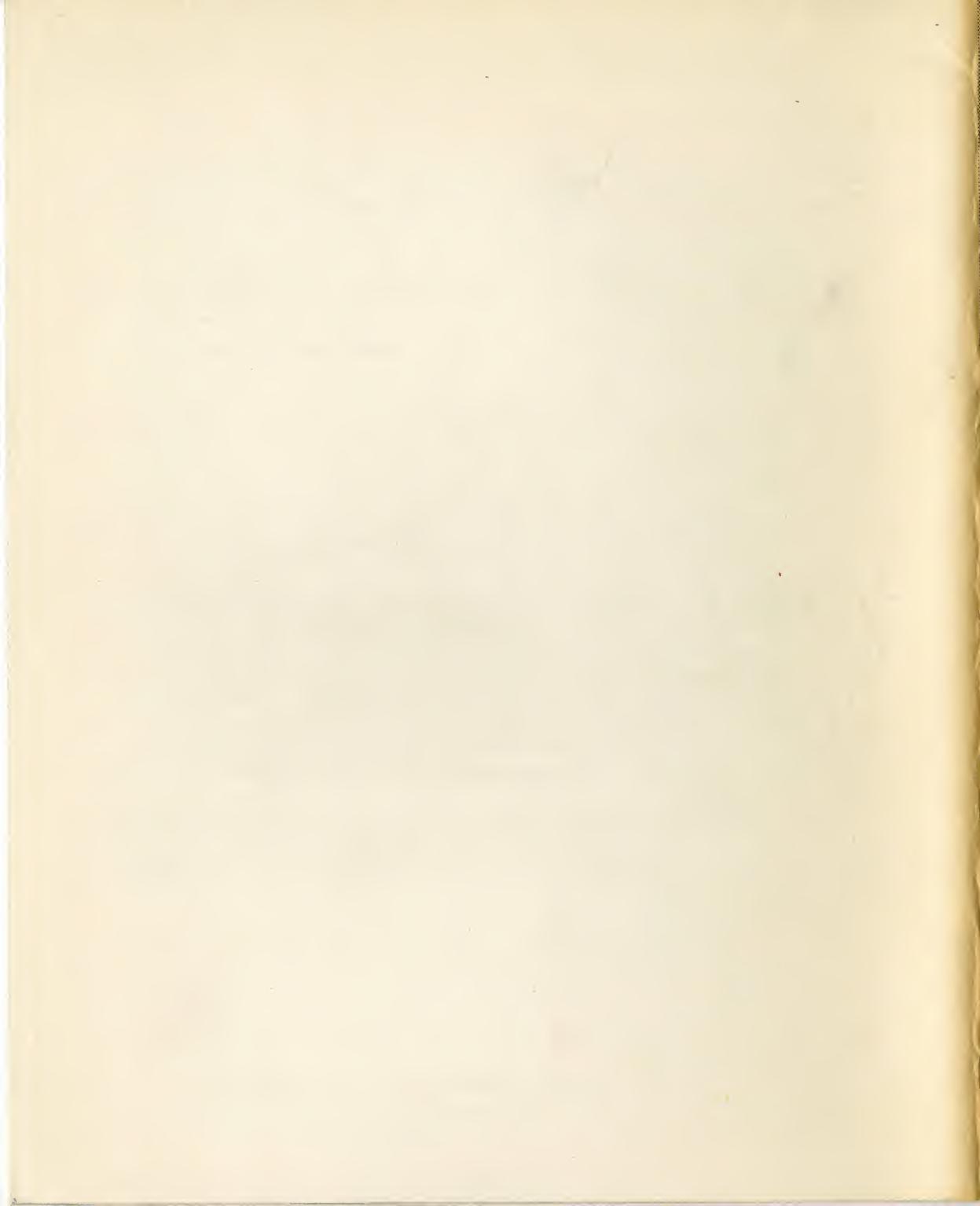
Yours sincerely

Malcolm Bishop

MALCOLM BISHOP



(? Self-portrait Editor)



The City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society
A special presentation to Members to Commemorate our 50th Anniversary

The Early Days of the
Gramophone Company

In 1898, Mr. Barry Owen established an office in Maiden Lane, near The Strand, in London, to sell Gramophones invented by Emile Berliner and produced by Eldridge Johnson. The Gramophone was rapidly established in London, ably assisted by Fred Gaisberg, who was the Company's 'talent - scout', accompanist - and it might even be said "visionary". Recall to that the word 'Gramophone' was patented & and not until 1910 did a judge rule it to be a generic term.

Through the courtesy of E.M.I.Ltd, we are able to give Members these reprints of some of the very first catalogues of the Gramophone Company. They consisted of 'leaflets' - some single sheets, in many different colours and in various states of preservation.

For instance, the "Stock List - Nov. 16th. 1898 . . English . . was printed in black on a very dark red paper. These catalogues, covering 1898 - 1900, were from the period in which collectors call the discs "Berliners". They were of 7-inch diameter, single-sided, having the titles etched upon their surface instead of labels. They were pressed in Hanover under the supervision of Joseph Berliner, though they were recorded in New York, London and other major towns.

As the June, 1900 list shows some British Bands with low catalogue numbers, it can be assumed that at this period, the London branch, & possibly others too, e.g. Paris, started building their own catalogues independently of the American office. The pianist for 5501 & 5503 on the Nov. 16th. 1898 . . English list is Fred Gaisberg.

E.Bayly
Secretary